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Though the present year has produced Tarkington's *Seventeen* and E. F. Benson's really notable school-boy story, *David Blaize*, the reader will probably place *The Human Boy* alone on the shelf he reserves for his favorites—the companionable books he would read again when opportunity offers—and purchase an extra copy to lend to his friends. W. S. RUSK.

OUR MILITARY HISTORY: ITS FACTS AND FALLACIES. By Leonard Wood, Major-General, U. S. Army. Chicago: The Reilly & Britton Company.

Scarcely any part of American history has been more subject to misconception—in the United States—than the history of our affairs military and naval. In educational circles during the last generation there was a constantly increasing tendency to decry the study of such things as harmful or of little account; while even when teachers were willing to give some attention to the subject, they were usually able to do little more than follow the tradition of explaining military history as it had been understood by a population essentially civilian, with small relation to martial science and military development in countries where war has been the profession of strategists and masters of changing military technique. Thus it happens that, although the American people have always been non-military and never at any time called to face singly a great military power, and have triumphed over puny antagonists or fought long-drawn-out struggles with terrible expense and waste and loss of life, this portion of their history was long represented as a record of actions glorious and successful, with the United States potent, invincible, and undoubtedly secure.

Doubtless we were safe at first, for we were away; and our independence once achieved, it mattered little to other powers how we held our course. When in the second half of the nineteenth century the world grew smaller, when nations drew closer together, and when our old isolation was gone, during a long while we did not perceive the changes, for we continued undisturbed. Europe was engrossed with its balance of power, and unable to harm us, if it would. So we developed in pride and pretension, stretching over continents and over far-distant island reservations and daring diplomatic doctrine. And our wealth increased until

we were a fabulous prize for marauders seeking plunder. Always our army was small, and scantily provided with reserves of munitions and men. But we went our way erect and proud and haughty and easily touched in national honor and ready to uphold ambitious diplomacy. Great alterations continued to metamorphose the world. The seas were narrowed by giant ships that crossed in days instead of weeks. Armies greater than our entire trained force might reach our shores months before effective opposition could be made ready; and conflicts, like the Franco-Prussian War, of nations prepared against nations unprepared, were settled in a little while, for military nations were equipped now with death-dealing instruments that made wellnigh infinite disparity between possessors and opponents not provided with them. But we knew little of all this, and thought not about it,—for we were endowed with the valor of ignorance.

It was the European War of 1914 that caused Americans to give to these matters some of the attention which patriots and well-informed men had oftentimes vainly sought to obtain. The awful changes wrought by the cataclysm abroad compelled a readjustment of values and a reconsideration of many things long taken for granted, at the same time that there was a vastly increased interest in everything relating to war. People began to feel vague and then urgent alarm about whether the United States were as safe from attack as was fondly assumed, and whether the military resources and the preparedness of the country were sufficient if ever emergency arose. Along with this quite naturally went a desire to examine again the records of the past relating to the experience of Americans in their previous wars, not so much for the purpose of ascertaining data as to re-interpret in the light of more intelligent criticism and of things which had suddenly assumed such enormous importance. Recently several excellent studies have appeared: the exhaustive work of Huidekoper, the more important contribution of Upton, and the admirable little volume here reviewed.

It is not necessary to say that General Wood is well qualified to write upon this subject, or that he has done it well. He has been foremost of late in fulfilling the patriotic duty of arousing his countrymen to perceive their inadequate military establish-

ment, and he has himself achieved distinction in military service. In part the book is obviously based upon Upton's work, but it contains also ideas which the author has expounded recently before numerous audiences. The writing is clear and pleasant, and the substance is weighty and deserving of attention.

There is small place for battles, victories, and martial exploits, such as one might expect to find in a military history. Rather it gives the plain story of our method and of our inefficiency in times past. It shows how the Revolution was fought mostly by means of a militia which enlisted for short periods, and constantly deserted, or withdrew when the period of enlistment expired, no matter what exigency Washington was in; how new soldiers had constantly to be trained; how we had more soldiers at the beginning of the conflict than at any time thereafter, our greatest force being about 90,000 in 1776 and dwindling steadily to less than 30,000 in 1781; how notwithstanding that nearly 400,000 men were enrolled during the war, yet at no time were there as many as 20,000 under Washington's command; how our efforts were clumsy, wasteful, and long drawn out, and in the end only successful because of aid received from France.

The story of our conflict with the Indians, of the War of 1812, of the Civil War, and of the War with Spain, is much the same. Always we were unready; always the militia was untrained and inefficient; always there was lack of equipment and ignorance of military technique; always disproportionate suffering, expense, and loss of life. From this record the war with Mexico is to some extent an exception, for then we were better prepared, and the militia not being available for service abroad, the war was fought with an unusually large proportion of well-trained men.

The lessons of the past have large import for the problems of now, for the defects of other times remain to these present days. Our regular military force is insignificant; a reserve scarcely exists; there is woful lack of officers to command the citizen armies which the country would have to call forth; there is scant stock of equipment and munitions; and large reliance is still placed upon a militia left in control of the several states.

The author urges that these defects be remedied while there is still time. Resources should be studied; materials and munitions stored up; national military forces should be placed altogether in the control of the federal government; and military service should be expected of all citizens as an obligation of their citizenship, boys and young men receiving, partly in connection with their youthful studies, military training, something after the manner of the system now prevailing in Switzerland or Australia.

The reviewer feels that in recommending this book—and he does recommend it heartily—he is doing service to readers and also to the country.

EDWARD RAYMOND TURNER.

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COUNTER-CURRENTS. By Agnes Repplier. New York and Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Miss Repplier is one of the few voices crying in the wilderness of American sentimentalism. We Americans find it so hard to see the world as it is and “see it whole”—the very thing the Greeks did with such increasing unconsciousness. Culture in the vital, comprehensive sense of open-mindedness seems so long in coming to dwell with any large section of our people. We are prone to substitute heart-mastery and dollar-mastery for head-mastery. It is for some such reasons as these, then, that a real treat is afforded to those who re-read the present essays by Miss Repplier collected from the *Atlantic* and the *Unpopular Review*.

With few exceptions,—Samuel McC. Crothers, Paul Elmer More, and a scant half dozen more,—Miss Repplier has the ability to see clearly both sides of the many problems of our complicated life. She is a conservative, possibly, but she does not condemn the new until it has been given a chance to show its value, and then only if it has been proved worthless. When both viewpoints have been assessed, she seeks to make a fundamental synthesis, and neither takes a headlong plunge after the latest fad on the slim evolutionary chance of its being the best, nor contents herself with looking backwards to see the only practical way of doing things. This does not mean that every reader will agree with all the conclusions drawn, but that there will probably